Bristol, December 12th 1851
Friday

My dear Mr May.

The unusual interval between my letters to you upon which you reasonably remark, is a matter quite beyond my control. I am in no want of subject, — in no want of inclination: — my head is clear enough, & I could find sufficient time by occasionally sitting up a little, or rising early, — but I have not physical ability to conduct my correspondence with any regularity. Writing letters is particularly trying to me, — those that I enjoy preparing, & as much as such as are of more difficult composition: often one, or two letters in the day are as much as I can undertake without an aching head, & an irregular heart. The consequence is, that I am never without a distressing number of unanswered letters. My daughter happily, now undertakes much of the A.S. correspondence, though with the increase of her exertions in this way, comes an increased demand.

I have no fear that you will suspect me of indifference to yourself or to the cause — I am sure you would give me full credit for regard to both did you know how much A.S. work we are doing, & how much we think of, talk of, & learn of you.

And now I will thank you for your last letter of Nov 14 which came on the 24 Nov with one from Miss A. Weston of the 11th.

I regret the affair about the Inquirer. Before your letter to the Editor came into my possession, to secure an explanation in the Inq., I drew up a statement:

Ms.B.1.6 v.4, p.42

ment of your exculpation, knowing that the Edr.
wd not insert all that was in the Libr; & this article
was duly published. Then, when your private letter
to the Edr came to my charge, (to prevent any mistake
as I had no confidence in the discretion or A.S. zeal
of the unknown temporary manager of the Journal,)
I thought it best to send it your letter to Mr. Lalor himself,
who had written the article calling upon you for
explanation, requesting him to comply with your
wishes as far as he thought best, & communicate
with the Ingr. for tho' no longer its official Edr. he
was supposed to keep up his interest in the paper.
The result you know. I was concerned to see your
P.S. about Mr. John Parkman, & almost wished I
had scratched it out, tho' it wd have been a liberty I
had no right, — certainly no call to take.

We have endeavoured by newspapers to keep you,
or some other of our Boston friends, informed upon our various
movements. We certainly do work very hard, & fancy
ourselves very busy in an important work; but I have
sometimes misgivings as to the real value of what
we are aiming to accomplish, the number of people in
this country who have a real Anti-slavery sentiment, being exceedingly small. We have during the last 3 or 4 weeks, been
much occupied in helping Edward Mathews, the
Free Mission Baptist, in his rather arduous attack upon
the Evl. Alliance. Indeed I believe he has no one able &
willing to give him the advice he needs, & to help him,
in the present stage of his labours, ~~in~~ to defray the necessary expenses
but ourselves. I presume the British papers will reach
you thro' some channel, & inform you of what is going on

Mathews has offended his "brethren" ~~for~~ by troubling the Alliance, & I fear will get little sympathy or mercy from them. Mr. Hinton Sec.y to the Baptist Union turns the "cold shoulder" to him — in a word his preference ~~for~~ of the Slaves' cause to that of the Baptist Denomination, is his great offence, — he has fought the battle here hitherto admirably. Mathews is not an educated man, nor one of a very comprehensive mind, but he is clear, firm, I believe thoroughly honest, fully up to the phase of the A.S. movement ~~in~~ to which he devotes himself, & I think as warmly & uncompromisingly the friend of the Slave as any person I know. In addition to all this, his good temper is remarkable. When Thompson spoke at the Broadmead Rooms, (the speech is in the Boston box) & explained how far & wide the labours of the "Am. A.S. Soc.y" had extended, Mathews thought (perhaps not unreasonably with his limited knowledge of the true A.S. movement,) that the labours of the "Free Mission Baptists" in Wisconsin were ~~not~~ unfairly ignored, the impression given by G.T. certainly being, to the uninformed, that no other body had done any A.S. work worthy of notice. This induced E.M. to give some particulars of the "Liberty Party," & the Wisconsin laborers on the following evening at the Soirée. G.T. came to the Soirée dyspeptic, having eaten a good dinner with us, & being tired with his previous days' work, — a dinner, always unfitting him he says for evening speaking. He certainly bore hard upon E.M. & made ~~his~~ M's friends & relatives who were present

almost weep when G. T. denounced good L. M. who
had given such evidence of sincerity, & had suffered so much fo
the Slave, as "*a perjured hypocrite*" — so at leas
he appeared to do to those who did not understand the
various *ifs*, as applied to the voting of the Liberty Pa
a type of which he assumed L. M. to be. G. T. told m
afterwards he was certainly too hard upon M. Hawe
as G. T. ~~he~~ regarded him as a "snake", Miss or Mrs. Chapman
considered him shallow & hollow, & Miss Weston
thought him wilfully false, & secretly hostile to th
Am. A. S. Soc. I have been very cautious in observi
W. M. & in obtaining from him, as far as I was ab
a full exposition of his past & present course, & of hi
future plans & purposes. The result is, an entire con
fidence in his good sense, & integrity, & consistency
His earnest wish to ~~help~~ promote the cause, & thankful
for help ~~in~~ from any quarter, override all attention, on his par t
the *parties* most active in the work: he admires
Mr Garrison's thoroughness — especially on the Chu
question, & has the highest estimate of him — Lew
Tappan he does not consider a first rate individu
nor the *Am. & For. A. S.* an efficient agency; — still,
"L. Tappan has written some tracts which were
very useful to the A. S. cause in Wisconsin", — & so h
feels obliged to him. Instead of the tortuosity of th
snake, I discover only straightforwardness in our
unpretending friend. We never could get our Am
friends, nor G. T. to clearly to see that those who wer
not against the *Am. A. S. S.* ought to be considered *for*
They all suppose, that among the very few A. S. peo
there are in this country, a degree of knowledge as it
to "*Old & New Organization*", quite contrary to the fa

MS.B.1.6 v.14 p.42

2nd) the consequence is, frequent erroneous judgment as to individuals: so I think they misjudge innocent Ed. Mathews. Of one thing I am certain: — he is doing a work out here which a professed member of the "Am. A. S. S." could not effect, & exactly the kind of work they wd wish to have done — He is free from ~~the~~ the stigma of joining with the "infidel party;— he is orthodox, a minister, & will find a footing in many religious congregations. His great purpose is the non-fellowshipping with slave holders by religious communities, & already he has gained the censure of many of the Baptist Ministers. — Several there are in this city who have united in strong A. S. Res.: but now Mathews has attacked the Ev. Alliance they shun him: this daring act has estranged the Quakers from him, who deplore his ~~attempts to~~ doing any thing to drive off the "Religious Bodies" from the A. S. cause. Mathews is making discoveries — to him curious & unexpected. He is finding out that these said "religious" bodies are ~~the~~ as deadly foes in England, as they are in Amer.a, at which he is surprised. to true Antislavery; & I am amused by his gradually perceiving, & acknowledging, that the same cry raised against the presumed infidel Garrison, is put forth against the orthodox Mathews, — they are "disturbers of the Churches" — E. M. sees, as I have told him, that his present course of offending Quakers, Baptists & other religious worthies will be fatal to his collecting much money for the "Free Mission Baptists"; but he will not allow this consideration even to modify his proceedings

Ms.B.1.6 v.14 p.42

He is a very hopeful & trustful man, & believes if he faithfully does his duty to the slave, Providence will, in some way or other, bring success to his Mission. — I have told him too, that in his progress thro' England he will find his best friends & supporters will be among the "infidel" Abolitionists — those attached by intelligent sympathy, to the Am. A.S. S. — I have since our late Meeting last week, put down my name as a subscriber of £3.3.0 to his Mission for I see that the spread of Antislavery principles are his first & greatest objects, — for beyond the diffusion of his orthodoxy. I don't care for the orthodoxy, if the Antislavery be spread! M. has worked his own way into a full knowledge of the destructive character of the B. & F. A.S. Soc. and of Scoble's delinquencies he has the amplest knowledge. he has just read me two letters from Canada, one from Mr Newman a coloured Missy at Dawn, the other from the Secy of the "F. Miss. Baptists" saying Scoble's conduct has been both dishonourable & dishonest there.

I have dwelled tediously perhaps on Mathews but I am anxious you shd know exactly what we think of him, & why we encourage him. We are acting upon our own judgment, in opposition rather to the opinions of those who, you would think, ought to guide us. But we are sure there can be most important A.S. agency out of the pale of the Am. ~~& For.~~ A.S. Soc., and so long as we see Edwd Mathews performing it among religious societies, to which we as friends of the Garrison party could gain no access, we must give him our sympathy & support notwithstanding his Liberty party notions, his ignorance of the history of the A. S. movement & his appreciation of the labours of

his seceded Society from the Baptists. In time I
believe he will become a no unworthy *Garrisonian*
Abolt in all essentials. I have always viewed
Clerical Abolt in America with suspicion: still
I shall rejoice to see genuine Abolt^ism^ united with
a religious creed, & even with a religious *Sect* —

You may suppose the delight we experienced
in having as our inmates for 5 weeks such intelligent
interesting & affectionate friends as Mrs Chapman an[d]
her two sisters & daughter. The visit was a *perfect* one;
everything went off without alloy, & they have left valu-
able impressions behind them. We ~~[illegible]~~ lamented
their going to France: in our view, there was nothing
but loss to themselves, & to us, & to the A S cause in
their not passing ~~[illegible]~~ one single winter ~~[illegible]~~ in England.
But they probably had good reasons for their decision
tho' unknown to us. We have heard from them,
written since the recent troubles in that distracted
& unprincipled country: no harm has happened
to them, I hope they may leave it before the next
Act begins. — I cannot get up the least interest
in the political condition of France: the quiet people
which there must be there, & the good ones which I
hope *may* be there, must continue the sport of
ambitious, reckless & self-seeking politicians;
while Absolutism is being strengthened among the
oppressed neighbouring nations, & a despotism
is being worked out for their own —

You have probably not seen a series of "Letters
on Am. Slavery" in consecutive numbers of the Chri~
Reformer by Russell Carpenter, who is now a settled Mi

nister with a newly formed congregation at Birkenhead opposite Liverpool across the Mersey. He is going to colle the Letters into a pamphlet. They constitute a melancholy example of want of clear vision, and of deep interest for the sufferings of the Slave, in a mind full of kindness & benevolence in all other matters. Such a strange mixture of pro-slavery & anti-slavery, of sensible remarks & twaddle, is not ofte seen! I hope the "Letters" will sooner or later be remarked upon in your papers.

You will be greatly amused when you see the dashing conduct of our "B.& Clifton Ladies A.S. So" in their "Declaration of Independence" of the B.& F.A.S.S. I think the Lib: will notice it.

There is an amusing set of contretemps going forw at present among the "religious" professors of Anti Slavery. You know, perhaps, that after the disturb ance we set up in the dissenting orthodox Churches, & the Res.ns passed by some of these Bodies, the "Reporter" was compelled to effect a little exposure of the pretended Anti Slavery of Churches. Whereupon Lewis Tappan waxes valfi & declares Mr. Chickering (who performed in the meeting of the Congregat.l Union the part of an Anti Slavery minister) a well known pro-slavery gentleman. For this unkindness, Dr. Campbell of the B. Banner, denounces L. Tappan as a "Moral Assassin" for defaming Chickering, & quotes a letter of "Revd." (Dr. Carru of Maine) as authority for Mr. Chick.'s Anti Slav & Dr. Carruthers calls to testify to the fact, "Father Henson"!!

Now Henson, (under a considerable cloud himself,) is in full activity with Scoble & Tappan, in doing all they can to cheat the F. Mission Brethren of the Dawn Institute! All their wheels are very apparent to Ed. Mathews, who will learn somethin

3rd/ as to the real friends of the Cause. I have much hope that "when rogues fall out, honest men will get their due". I shall keep Mr Grant of the Morn^g Adv^r. up to this matter.

I am sorry for Douglass's change, & cannot but fear that pecuniary circumstances, or ambitious views, may have had some share in his conduct. His treatment of G.T. was too bad. Mr Webb has sent F.D. an admirable letter: I hope he may insert it in his paper.

One remark of Douglass's certainly struck me as a probably honest expression of sentiment, - that made at the Rhode Island A.S. Soc^y. & described in the Lib^r. of Mar 21 - the unfavorable effect on his own mind of constantly denouncing religious bodies. I liked his observations made at that Meeting on the Thursday; - the more eral opinion I suppose will be that F.D. is be- ming canting, & assuming the garb of religion: if he be sincere, his change will not be all loss to him.

Your remarks upon Vespucci were interesting to me: we have done a great deal here to enlighten him upon Am. Slavery. Mr Armstrong wrote him an admirable letter, & Dr also spoke with him on the subject. I made up two packets of tracts for him, one sent thro' Mazzini, the oth. w thro' Chas. Gilpin. Mr Grant writes me that he had repeated interviews with Lemmi, V's Sec^y, & that there is no fear for V.'s committing himself. Your report of the efforts to lower him in public estimation, makes me more hopeful of his not being ensnared to overlook Am. Slavery.

I have lately had most satisfactory accounts of the Crafts. Miss Lushington writes to my daughter that "they are improving in their learning very fast" they can both read quite nicely, are much improved in their writing, & can write when slowly dictated to. Their gentleness, united to great perseverance, has I think, won the greatest credit & esteem for them. I am quite struck by the respect shewn for them by the village people, we are much pleased with Crafts workmanship & Ellen has also much improved the girls' work. They are very regular in attendance at Church, & seem to like it. If you could tell us of any alteration you would wish for them we would gladly attend to it"

Mrs. Jenner the Mistress of the Ockham schools writes to me in the highest terms of Ellen, with whom only she has to do; speaks of her perseverance, her neglect of no opport.y of improvement, & of the great acquisition she is to the family circle of her daughters & herself, and by the same post Wm. Craft has wr me a note, perfectly well spelt, & looking like copper-plate. The dates are 27th 1851 - "Wm. says we are in good health, & find ourselves learning quite fast" I have been able with no difficulty to collect within a trifle enough for their first years' board & schooling. Lady Byron is much interested for them, & is carefully watching their progress. It is not improbable that when assured of their steady improvement she may undertake their maintenance &c for another year, - but if not, they shall not want the required pecuniary aid: - their friends will not forget them, especially when they have shewn themselves worthy of help. Craft felt some scruples about being educated at any expense to his friends. - There can be no reason purpose against your giving any publicity to the account of the Crafts at Ockham that you may think desirable.

And now with one or two little matters of business I must conclude.

Will you enter as a donation to the Boston Bazaar Friends from the I. of Wight pr. Revd. Edmund Kell £1..5..0 I will pay the money to Mr. Webb.

It wd. be a useful proceeding for an A. S. Standard to be sent gratuitously to Mrs. (Dr) Massie, Upper Clapton, London. She is an ardent friend of the cause, & related to Mr. Grant of the M. Advr.

I had begun a letter to Miss A. Weston to inclose with one Mary was writing, but I cannot go on with it: she will write a short one to Miss W.

I must finish abruptly owing to an urgent interruption so accept best love my daughter's regards.

Ever sincerely Yours

J. B. Estlin

Stamped.

Dec.r 1857

1. Edward Mathews.

Revd. Saml. May Jr.
21 Cornhill,
Boston
U. States

~~Sesson~~
Box

POSTAGE ONE SHILLING

Mr. Grant
"
~~The Hop~~
"
The Free
"
The anti-Slavery

The Crafts

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Ms.B.1.6 v.4 p.42